The Inquirer

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THE CHURCH

FOR masses of people the Church is an irrelevance. They make their own particular adjustments to the act of living and carry on very well without the Church.

Is it then needed? If the answer of history is important then there is only one answer. Mankind has lifted itself out of its hidden past by realizing greatnesses of the human spirit not practised commonly in daily life. This has been the Church, the communal acknowledgement that there are laws of the spirit as well of daily conduct.

Mankind, always in spiritual peril, and consequently always in peril of social disaster, has in the long run been saved by the saints (mostly unknown) and not by kings, emperors and warriors. The most powerful men in history, in the long run, have been, for instance, the founders of the great religions. The history of the saints is not written. Little enough is known, for instance, about the lives of Jesus of Nazareth and Gautama. Yet the social consequence of those lives is clear enough. The saint indeed is set so apart from the commonly accepted that he cannot be described in art or drama. Shakespeare can give magnificence to Hamlet or Macbeth, but where are the saints?

The truth is that men cannot describe their vision of goodness without blurring it. But that the vision exists defying all the precepts of common sense is apparent by the way men have risen above common sense.

Power and Enlightenment

Jesus and Gautama would be lost in the common activities of today. What could one of them say in the talks between Mr. Macmillan and Krushchev? Not a word. Yet these two men would be completely lost without the foundations of spiritual truth laid by the creators of the great religions. And there is little doubt about the comparison the masses of mankind still draw between those who have to talk in terms of power, and those who spoke in the past in terms of spiritual enlightenment.

The world would be dark indeed if it were left with the kings, emperors, dictators and powerful men of the last 40 years, and not with the exemplars of the great religions.

The Church in its true form is the memory and practice of all this. It is the constant reminder that the common and accepted passes and the vision of the might-be always remains; that man's real home lies in the unattained and the unattainable, and that all his accomplishments sooner or later are judged by that.

The real Church—wherever it can be found—makes the contrast between what it represents and the imperfect society in which it must live. It saves society in the long run by the ideal it offers to men to live by, when corruption becomes too painful to be borne. The real Church—wherever it can be found—is a challenge to the world. Therefore the Church must exist, and when it ceases to exist there will always be men who will try to create it again.

The Seen and the Invisible Church

But the seen Church is not always the real Church. Inevitably, because corruption cannot be kept out of what men create. But the seen Church can be the symbol of the invisible Church, of the Church of vision and not of accomplishment. And the seen Church can always judge itself by the invisible.

But the vision! How to see it clearly and act on it! How often it is blurred by common standards! How even begin to mingle it with the heroic!

The illusion persists that we moderns are somehow different in degree from all that has existed in the past. That somehow or other all our moral capital is in the bank and that we, morally, need bother no longer.

The illusion is that the Church is an irrelevance or a historic accident, and because it tends to be as other things are, therefore it can be neglected.

But the illusion that the modern world can get by without sainthood is painfully an illusion, one that is admitted in an offhand way by those who struggle in the secular manner with the brutal modern corruptions. When the majesties of science can be used in the threat that is known so deep in the modern consciousness; and when men live daily on the cheap and banal and march to their future with no other help than this, then in an off-hand way it is admitted that what has been lost is lost.

The Church is always waiting to be built. In a sense it always has been, for in its realized truth lies the salvation of mankind.

It is doubtful if any activity of today is so important as the building of the Church, the triumph of the spirit beyond the commonplace.

NO TIME TO THINK

By A. Phillip Hewett

(The following is taken from an address delivered by Mr. Hewett to the Vancouver congregation.)

EVERY week a considerable number of bulletins and newsletters from other churches come to my desk. Many of them contain thoughtful and reflective messages from my colleagues in the Unitarian ministry. I want to share with you some words of a Unitarian minister in one of these newsletters that reached me recently. He says: "I had been thinking about the paradox that modern man, with all his time-saving gadgets, seems to have less time than any of his ancestors. A leisurely life is a rarity in our day. There are not many who can call their souls their own."

It was at this point that my telephone rang with irritating urgency, and turning to it reluctantly I heard the voice of one of the men I admire most in this world asking if he could come over to see me right away. With a little shifting and manœuvring it was possible, and he came.

"I don't know what to do", he said. "Thinking is my business, and I no longer have time to think. Ideas are my trade, but I find that the moment I express them I become the butt of hundreds of demands that I do something about them. People are so anxious today that they have fallen into a kind of frenzy. They want to do something, anything! They care to distraction. Because I, too, care and can speak out, they come to me. I am unable to answer half of the letters. My days are crowded with visits from sincere folk whose goodwill I cherish, but whose energies I am unable to put to work. I can't even answer my telephone. I belong to so many worthy organizations that I feel worthless to any of them. Worst of all, I have no more time to think!"

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All that I could reply was that he had come to the wrong place for advice. If I knew the answer to his problem, I would have tried to implement it myself. I, too, often feel caught in the web of my own desires, anxieties, hopes, dreams, and good intentions. I, too, feel ensnared by my own efforts to implement my own most cherished ideals.

The older ones among you who have retired may find time for quiet and reflection, for doing things deliberately. However, many people have told me that since they retired, they find themselves doing more things than ever before. Certainly there are plenty of voluntary organizations, including churches, which think that once you have retired you have all the time in the world. So they are eager to help you use that time.

But those of us who are in the main stream of an active career by which we earn our living can certainly find the sentiments I have read coming very close to us. Are you in that position? Am I? Are we perhaps, collectively, as a church, in that position? What I have to say about this is not only addressed to you, but to myself as well. It is notorious, however, that doctors are the worst people in the world for taking their own prescriptions. Often it is so with ministers, too.

Let's look at the problem. Our nice new clean diaries which we bought last month are already beginning to get cluttered up with all sorts of engagements for days and weeks and months ahead. Mine is at any rate. Some of the coming events we note down are ones which we look forward to with some eagerness. Others are ones which we look upon as an inescapable part of our duty as citizens or as members of this and that, out of which we will no doubt get some satisfaction when they come, but for which we would just as happily substitute something else. And others again are ones about which perhaps I had better say little.

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But many of us are getting dangerously close to an enslavement to the clock and the calendar, and all our boasts of freedom are of little worth if this tyranny has emerged to take the place of any other tyrannies which we may have shaken off. We are bombarded with demands on our time. Somehow we have to learn to say "No". We rush around from one place to another, we pore over time-tables and schedules. Even when we are physically sitting still in a car, or train, or bus, we are mentally hurrying forward in tune with the engine, wondering whether we are going to meet our commitments at the other end. And the lateness which is characteristic of practically every public gathering of any description is simply an ineffective protest governed by exactly the same factors as the time-table itself.

We try to make ourselves more efficient, to organize our time, as we say, to the best advantage; in other words, to turn ourselves as far as possible to smoothly functioning machines. In my last church (which was built some two and a half centuries ago) there is a large clock on the back wall facing the minister but behind the congregation—a clock which, incidentally, breaks its silence every hour with a single note which informs not only the minister but everyone else that the sermon is going on too long. It seems to me that in many of the new churches which are being built today to serve our contemporary needs it would be more appropriate to put the clock not in an unobtrusive place at the back, but upon an elevated altar at the front, as one of the characteristic symbols of the forms taken by modern worship.

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But it is not a question of ceaseless hurrying and scrambling, nor is it a question of continuous stillness and quiet. It is a matter of knowing how to use time and how to transcend time, these two together. We have to learn to live in more than one dimension, and not to skid madly over the surface of life. John Burroughs, in his poem "Waiting", sums up the beginning of a wise approach to the scurry of life:

"I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face."

The word "eternal" is the keyword here. It is one of the great key words of religion, and like all such key words it has been greatly distorted and degraded by superficial and shallow forms of religion. In its fullness and richness, it stands for what is opposed to the things of time, and not, as in popular misrepresentation, an indefinite extension of time onward and onward forever, a prospect which has caused many sensitive souls to recoil with horror.

T. S. Eliot, I think, has captured the deeper meaning when he writes:

"Men's curiosity searches past and future
And clings to that dimension. But to apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint",

and by saint he means not an impeccable person, but one who is really concerned for the genuine spirit of religion. It is the function of religion to find the point at which the time and timeless intersect, the point at which we can be released from subservience to the tyranny of time, seeing outside time so to speak, without ever getting the delusion that we are going to maintain an existence outside of time unless we are Buddhas who have achieved Nirvana—and that would be a rash claim indeed.

From The Aberdeen Calendar

The "Wayside Pulpit" on the front of our Church, which carries two or three texts from various sources each month, is compiled at our Headquarters. It suggests something of our message to the passers-by, and in Aberdeen, it is accepted as striking and unique. These texts are very widely observed, and we have been amused to learn that, if there is any delay in putting up a new one, anonymous members of the public call on our Church Officer demanding to have the next "thought" displayed for their meditation forthwith.

A LAYMAN'S NOTES

By A Lay Contributor

"CAN anyone wonder", wrote the Rev. A. B. Downing in *The Inquirer* a fortnight ago, "that some of us are apostles of far more aggressive tactics, in which we valiantly assert our differences from Orthodoxy rather than sentimentalize over our similarities to it?" And he added: "Not everyone, I fear, will like that remark, but it is worth thinking about".

I am sure that it is worth thinking about. Even by people who may be dubious about the new "tactics" which Mr. Downing is advocating. I am no trained psychologist, but I do have enough insight, I hope, into the way my mind ticks to realize that if I find myself reacting with instinctive hostility to a new idea, the fault may lie, not in the idea, but in my own make-up. It is true, of course, that there are some ideas which are so clearly false, or morally wrong, that one is justified in reacting immediately in a hostile manner. But the number of such ideas is limited, and often one's hostile reaction to a new suggestion is not so easy to justify as all that. We may think we are saying, "That idea is utterly wrong," when really we mean, "if I accept this new idea, I shall have to jolt myself out of a comfortable and predictable way of life and venture into a field of action in which every move will require careful thought". That is not an attractive prospect, so we find ourselves saying, "It must be wrong: yes, that's what it is, *wrong*". And, glowing with righteous indignation, we sink back into our armchairs—or blow off steam in a letter to the Editor, which is often, I suspect, just another way of avoiding the uncomfortable exercise of really thinking a problem out, and trying to see what positive good there is in the other fellow's proposition.

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Anyway, let us try to have an objective and dispassionate look at Mr. Downing's suggestion.

There are a few Unitarians, I suppose, who manage to live, as it were, in a theological vacuum. Secure in their particular brand of Unitarianism, they cut themselves off entirely from orthodox Christian ideas. Like the Three Wise Monkeys, their motto is: "See no orthodoxy; hear no orthodoxy; speak no orthodoxy". Never read the *Church Times* or the *Methodist Recorder*, or the writings of C. S. Lewis or William Temple. Never listen to a B.B.C. religious broadcast; and never attend a service at a non-Unitarian church. Never embark on any discussion of religious matters with orthodox Christians, because "it'll just be a waste of time".

But I hope there are only a few of us like that. More of us, I fancy, like to keep in touch with developments in other churches; we are interested in the Lambeth report, the fuss about ordination of women in Sweden, the Scottish reaction to "The Bishops' report", the Anglican-Methodist and Presbyterian Congregationalist conversations; we listen to broadcast services and religious talks, and occasionally attend our parish church or some congenial Free Church; we enjoy discussing matters of common interest with friends who belong to other churches.

It is to us, I think, that Mr. Downing is speaking. And I feel he is saying something which needed to be said.

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Now if he is right about the need for "far more aggressive tactics" and "valiantly asserting our differences from orthodoxy", how are we to begin?

Before we start being "aggressive" and "asserting our differences" (I think I would prefer to say "before we start firmly asserting our own position, not bothering overmuch whether it differs from orthodoxy or not"; simply asserting differences will not get us far), surely we have to sort out what we are going to get aggressive about. This is not another plea for that hardy perennial, "a sorely needed restatement of the Unitarian faith". (For the time being the Commission's report, *A Free Religious Faith*, is good enough for me.) But what is badly needed, I think, is a new evaluation of the role which the Unitarian movement should be playing in the religious life of the country. At the moment, Unitarians have a number of different contacts, at different levels, with groups and individual members of other churches. Is there any thread of consistency running through the words and actions of Unitarian representatives on the British Council of Churches, and on local councils of churches and ministers' fraternals, and the words and actions of individual Unitarians who have friendly contact with active members of other denominations? I wonder. I have a feeling that we are mostly "playing it by ear", and that chances of making a characteristically Unitarian impact are being lost.

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"What kind of an impact is that?" I can hear someone asking. It is a good question, and I can only hint at an answer here; at some later time I should like to attempt a fuller reply. For the time being, let me say that, to my mind, Mr. Downing has only put forward *half* a policy by saying in effect, "Let us indulge in more outspoken criticism of orthodoxy". I should prefer to say, "At all levels of contact, let us offer (1) more criticism, combined with (2) more co-operation". If we simply get aggressive and outspoken, we run the risk of arousing antagonism without achieving anything to show for it. But if we make it clear that our main concern is to co-operate more closely with our fellow churches and fellow Christians, by contributing some of the unique lessons which we have learned from the practical working of a creedless liberal-religious life, our goodwill will be recognized, and any criticisms we have to offer will stand a better chance of being sympathetically received.

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In any event, whatever role the Unitarian movement chooses for itself in this field should be preferable to the lukewarm "love-hate" relationship which seems at present to exist between us and the other Christian churches. If we could define what our proper attitude in this relationship should be, not only could we make quite a significant contribution to church relations in the country as a whole, but we could also sharpen and clarify our objectives in our own minds. In short, we could get a little nearer to a satisfactory answer to the question, "But what do Unitarians *do*?" And that, to my way of thinking, is a more vital question, these days, than "What do Unitarians *believe*?"

SCOTS WHA HAE

ROBERT BURNS AND A UNITARIAN

MORE than one writer in *The Inquirer* seemed anxious recently to suggest some Unitarian connection with Robert Burns. There is a much more vital connection than his having had a Unitarian biographer. The famous poem "Scots Wha Hae", represented as a battle-call of the Bruce against the English tyrant, was, in fact, a deliberate mask for Burns' frustrated rage at the injustice being done at the time to the Unitarian minister Fyshe Palmer.

Those were the times of the American and French revolutions and the British Tory reaction. Thomas Muir had recently been tried in Edinburgh as a fellow-traveller of the French Revolution, and been given fifteen years' transportation. Burns had been pulled up, warned and humiliated by threat of dismissal from the Excise if he did not cease from hinting at the same sympathies. In August-September, 1793, Fyshe Palmer was, in his turn, undergoing the ghastly pleasantries of the uninhibited judge, Lord Braxfield, and the spectacle cast Burns into fits of depression and anger. The outcome, as he describes in a letter, was "Scots Wha Hae".

Fyshe Palmer (1747-1802) was the first minister of our congregation in Dundee. A Cambridge man, a rising light in the Church, an acquaintance of Dr. Johnson, he was converted to Unitarianism by the writings of Priestley. He came first to Montrose (1783) to help William Christie in the Unitarian Society founded by him there. In 1785 he founded the Unitarian Church in Dundee, and became well-known in the other cities in Scotland and in Newcastle.

His education was useful to some of his radical friends, and his grammatical corrections to some fiery speeches of others laid him open to official suspicion. He was charged with treason, sentenced to seven years' transportation and put in irons with felons. Debates in the Lords and Commons failed to reverse these panic sentences. Muir, Palmer and other Radicals were put to sea early next year in the convict ship *Surprise* for Botany Bay. A "Narrative" of their endurances was written by Palmer, and if ever a film-producer hits on these men's stories he will have to fetch out his biggest sets and his more active actors for the hard going, the ship-wrecks, the cutlass fights and the pirate escapades.

Palmer completed his sentence in 1800, and tried to make his way home with a Dundee friend. They were cast about in the Pacific and its islands through all kinds of misfortune and adventures. In the midst of it all Palmer's health gave out, and he died on one of the Mariana Islands in 1802. Here he had been a prisoner of the Spaniards who had treated him decently, and who buried him by the shore.

In 1804 an American sea-captain (acting, some say, under the order of the President) negotiated for the remains of Palmer and brought them back for honoured re-burial in Boston cemetery. Palmer's name is with others on the huge obelisk in the Old Carlton Burial Ground in Edinburgh. What is likely to be a portrait of him is in the vestry of our church in Dundee. And the temper and tension of this ferocious episode is preserved in the strident call to liberty of "Scots Wha Hae".

An account of this poem is not given in the recently published Burns' Encyclopaedia. And at no time does a Burns' enthusiast attempt to explain why the author of this spirited battle-hymn of freedom had not the courage to come into the open, or to stand in the dock with the Unitarian who had so stirred his nobler nature. W.B.T.

Views, News and Notes

By A. B. Downing

WE in the Manchester area are all feeling acutely the loss of Dr. Wilde, who died so short a time before seeing the realization of his dreams in the reopening of Cross St. Chapel. We all felt an intense respect for him. His unceasing kindness and charitableness inspired affection and gratitude in all of us. It was a very large and a very sad congregation indeed which met at Platt Chapel to pay tribute to him. Someone remarked on the number and variety of lay people who were present, representing all the breadth and diversity that had characterized his contribution to our movement as a Christian pastor. In a most wonderful sense Dr. Wilde was a minister of God. It was to the Eternal Spirit of Love and Compassion that he gave a lifetime of obedience.

Our grief was all the greater because he was still in the active ministry, giving all his many gifts to the service of Cross St. Chapel and dying, indeed, in harness to its needs and its hopes. His fine academic work for the Unitarian College was, of course, additional to all this. To his brethren in the ministry his loss is a very great and personal one. Every single word spoken by the Rev. F. Cottier, who conducted the funeral service, and by Principal Kenworthy, who gave the farewell address, went straight to the hearts of all of us.

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With the impending closure of the old Unitarian Chapel at Nantwich (Cheshire)—the chapel once served by Joseph Priestley—the local Press has been making extended references to this old meeting house and to the interest expressed by American Unitarians in acquiring the fittings and memorials it contains. American Unitarians are specially interested in any mementos of Priestley, who has an honoured place in the annals of American history.

The closing of the old chapel, which looks like being unavoidable, is a sad blow to people like Miss Francis and Mr. C. T. Corn, who have laboured with the utmost devotion to keep the cause alive. Mr. Corn, in particular, has been struggling against great odds. Those of us—far too few—who know something of his difficulties could wish that other Unitarians knew more about the debt our movement owes to him. A debt it certainly owes him for all his tenacity and hard work and not least for the admiration he has inspired in others as a respected Unitarian. Despite his disappointments, may he feel that many other Unitarians honour him for all his efforts and are deeply grateful to him for all that he has tried to do to preserve our witness in a place where help from other Unitarian churches has not been easy to give.

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Turning from a very old cause to a new one, I am glad to report that the Rev. John Gill has made a fighting impact upon the well-known Wythenshawe Housing Estate, through a very fine, and what the editor calls a controversial, article in the local paper. He makes some honest and direct remarks about what the new Unitarian church can contribute to the life of Wythenshawe—that large "garden-city" on the outskirts of Manchester. He tells Wythenshavians bluntly that "it matters more how we live than what we say we believe and that theological differences are man-made mountains which can only be removed by a true faith in the common goodness of human nature".

It was grand to see such a stirring article printed prominently right under the paper's editorial—"a free church calling to a free people". In our English life local newspapers are very important, for people happen to read them! He has also some simple and important things to say about family life—the sort of things which count above all in a place like Wythenshawe. We do all wish him good luck in his new missionary endeavours in this famous housing estate. May his new church building become a real religious community centre.

Correspondence

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C. 1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

The Birth Stories

SIR,—I suppose it might be as embarrassing if a Minister of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches confessed that he accepted literally the traditional Nativity story, as it has been when an Anglican clergyman or a minister of the orthodox Free Churches announced that he accepted only a poetic or symbolic interpretation. Nevertheless, the late Bishop Barnes and Dean Inge did somehow manage to remain within the Church of England (to the distress, it is true, of many devout believers in the first instance), and I believe even Bishop Gore had some doubts on whether in all cases literal belief in the Virgin was essential to Church membership, although he had himself that belief. Archbishop Temple, we know, had some hesitation about this, and was bidden to pray over it, with the fortunate result that his prayers were answered appropriately in due course.

There are Modernists in many churches who certainly do not accept either the Virgin Birth or, in general, the Nativity story as authentic, including both ministers and laity. If that be so, it would hardly seem amiss if within our own churches tolerance was exercised among those who believe in theological liberty not only for plentiful negations, but also for unconventional affirmations. Some of our early predecessors in the liberal faith had queer ideas that, if resurrected today, would assuredly be unfamiliar in current Unitarianism. Surely, therefore, we can appreciate such as Ernest Green if they wish to be unconventional within the liberal fold, even if "we have decided against the possibility of the birth being miraculous in the traditional sense". "We", I assume, means most of us, and not an Assembly decree

We have not yet agreed that to refer to Jesus as "Son" is anathema, and so I need not write "son of God", thus inconsistently employing a capital "G" in juxtaposition when I could democratically recognize a pantheon of deities, even if one unitary conception has in the end prevailed. Perhaps "Son of Man" is uncontroversial and less likely to provoke objection than, say, my reference to Gandhiji as denoting a rare type of Hindu.

Apart from this, may I venture to suggest that in our necessity of emphasizing what has been converted from the legendary and the poetic into literal fact, we frequently ignore the essential significance of the Nativity story. Personally, I do not believe in the historicity of either the Virgin Birth (should I have typed "virgin birth"?) or of the Nativity story as a whole. The evidence is too slight for me to accept. But it is surely impressive that a tradition developed concerning the birth of Jesus in poverty and obscurity; that Wise Men (sorry, again, for the capitals) and Shepherds knelt to the Infant in homage; and that the Magnificat, with its drastic if not revolutionary content, has been attributed to Mary.

All kinds of legends have grown up with the development of Christianity and of other religions, and I submit that while these may have no historical basis, yet they may have a profound psychological content, perhaps in some cases not without some historical element. Even without the latter, the Nativity story reveals a human disposition and a deep truth, in so far as it embodies the affirmation that the Glory of God often springs from lowly places and is enshrined in the commonplace. Trite? Yes, but nonetheless majestic in its significance of the Christian message. "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree", has its profound meaning whoever first said or wrote it, and the more so because it has been attributed to Mary. The sense of Divine wonder and promise can be identified with the birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph not only without denying the same essential wonder and promise to all the newly-born, but actually enhancing this to many with "clay-shuttered doors".

I plead, therefore, that while we appreciate how legend has accreted, and why we must discriminate between assumption and fact, we should be spiritually sensitive to the glowing significance that has become associated pictorially and ethically with the Nativity of Jesus Christ, because it is the projection of something very precious and sanguine in the human soul within the context of Christendom.

"The heart has reasons . . ." that have validity even although we must not confuse fact with fancy, and thus we may feel truths within their legendary or mythical husk.—Yours,

London, E.17. *Reginald Sorensen.*

"Barking Up The Wrong Tree"

SIR,—I am so much in sympathy with the tenor of Mr. Downing's article that I hate to say that he is barking up the wrong tree. He is asking more from a Headquarters than it could possibly give. Conversely, the last place to put a spiritual leader is in Essex Hall.

But the main point of this letter is to point out one blessing which cannot be taken for granted—that the finest creative mind in our Movement is already in the position where he can do most good, in that he is the Editor of this journal.

In case I should be accused of any complacency, I will also mention the sad fact that there are many Unitarians, ministers as well as laymen, who would only too willingly sacrifice your articles for more acrid controversies on church politics, more accounts of Rose Queens, whist drives, etc., and more chatty titbits. All the more should we be grateful to you and the Board which supports you. It is relevant to Mr. Downing's suggestion to ask what would happen to *The Inquirer* if it was run by a Committee of the G.A. Council.

I suppose it is not a coincidence that the real answer to Mr. Downing's concern is in the closing paragraphs of your leading article in the same number.—Yours,

Bury. *Fred M. Ryde.*

The Sheffield District Women's League held their annual meeting on Wednesday, February 11, 1959, at Upper Chapel, Sheffield.

All the usual business of such a meeting was dealt with, revealing, as always, the splendid support the Churches receive from the Women's League. The retiring President, Mrs. E. D. Davis, with congratulations and good wishes, installed her successor, Mrs. Whitaker, of Doncaster. During the meeting, a letter was read from a past Vice-President, Mrs. Bradford, now visiting in Auckland, New Zealand. From the funds donations were voted to the Central Committee, Margaret Barr, The Unitarian College, The Hucklow Homes, Hibbert Houses and the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief.

After tea in Channing Hall, the meeting assembled in the Chapel for the service, conducted by Mrs. G. Stanley Whitby. In her address, she gave carefully considered conclusions concerning the position of women today as compared with their position twelve years ago, as she herself then saw it. No matter what changes arise, however, the challenge constantly to be met was, "Be what thou seemest, live thy creed". In meeting that challenge, with living belief in the spiritual values—beauty, truth, love—a part of the Kingdom of God was brought to earth.

During tea, Mrs. Lomax, of Doncaster, expressed thanks for the hospitality of the Upper Chapel Branch, to the preacher, Mrs. Whitby, and to the Upper Chapel Organist.

News Review

NORTHERN COMMENTS

From A Northern Correspondent

The new Unitarian church at Wythenshawe, Manchester, is coming along by leaps and bounds. The congregation is worshipping in one room which has already been opened and a modern kitchen has been put to good use already by the ladies of the church. Evening services are conducted by the minister, Rev. J. Gill, on Sunday each week with increasing numbers—especially among younger people.

An electronic organ of high repute has been purchased for the new church which, it is hoped, will open at the beginning of June. The North has suffered a severe winter this year, with a record amount of industrial smog. The bad weather has delayed the workmen on the site to such an extent that the opening day has consequently been pushed back two months—from April to June. There is a great spirit of eager enthusiasm at Wythenshawe—everybody from the eldest right down to the youngest member—is "itching to do something" for the new church: a revolutionary church in its design, as regular *Inquirer* readers will hear when the church does officially open its new doors.

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The Manchester District of the Unitarian Women's League held its Annual General Meeting at Brookfield Church, Gorton, on Saturday, February 14. The meeting began with a service in the 250-year-old Gothic church, conducted by Mrs. Bradshaw, the President of the Liverpool branch. During the meeting proper Mrs. O'Brien, of Altrincham Church, Cheshire, was elected president of the Manchester District League for the next three years. The Brookfield ladies can boast that they seated nearly 200 guests to tea at one go. Well done, Brookfield—and the U.W.L.!

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Mr. Peter Jones, who is a student at the Unitarian College, Manchester, became Lay Pastor of Macclesfield Unitarian and Presbyterian Church early in February. Mr. Jones is Macclesfield's first regular minister since the retirement of Rev. G. D. Foote, last years. Mr. Jones, who hails from Sale, Cheshire, is 28 years of age.

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In February Mr. Kenneth Robinson, of Sale Church, thought that he would like to do something for the unfortunate boys—some of whom are orphans, others "unwanted" children, but all parentless—who live at a Council-run Home in Sale. After consulting Sale Church Committee and the minister, the Rev. John Gill, it was decided to approach the warden of the Home with a view to having the boys down at Sale's Old Unitarian Chapel for one evening each fortnight. Consent was given and Mr. Robinson started his Youth Club with a dozen lads aged between 10 and 14. The club depends at present entirely on voluntary subscriptions—it was through two of these, totalling £3, that Mr. Robinson was able to take a party of boys round Manchester Fire Brigade's Headquarters on Saturday, February 14. He hastens to tell us that his boys were not in any way responsible for the four fires which broke out causing thousands of pounds' worth of damage in the centre of Manchester on the same evening—good luck, Ken!

THE INQUIRER

YOUTH SUPPLEMENT

BY THE UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE

IS YOUR MINISTER REALLY NECESSARY?

By Gwyneth Roberts

(The writer has a law degree and a social science certificate. She is at present conducting research to establish an Intelligence Test for Welsh-speaking children.)

"I DON'T blame them. They've got a good racket and make the most of it." This opinion, quoted by Rowntree and Lavers in their "English Life and Leisure", seems to represent what a large proportion of the community thinks about the Ministry. This study of the cultural and spiritual life of the country claims to have found "so widespread a dislike of the ministers of religion of the Anglican and Free Churches that it can only be described as anti-clericalism".

The age of the pulpit-giants has passed; the twenty century Martineaus or Channings no longer command the respect accorded to their predecessors; and oratory today calls for charm on the small screen, rather than power in the pulpit.

What are the duties of a minister today? A clear conception of his task is the first essential if a man is to do his work successfully—and yet there is widespread confusion, not only among laymen, but in the ministry itself. In the words of an American bishop: "There are times when one is a little ashamed of being a clergyman . . . ashamed to be identified with what other men in the smoking compartment conceive it to be. In the back of their minds is the conviction that most ministers are engaged in snooping into other people's business, regulating other people's morals, and endeavouring to standardize other people's brains. They regard all ministers alike as professional members of the society of moral uplifters". When the community regards his work as unimportant, the minister must often feel frustrated in his efforts.

In the church, the minister finds himself forced into a mould, into the role which he is *expected* to play. Certain traditional tasks must be fulfilled: routine pastoral visits must be made to members of the congregation, even although the usefulness of such calls has long since been disproved. A virile church cannot be built by people who believe that a minister's main job is to keep "looking them up".

Our churches are often small in membership, and the minister's financial position is insecure. In such circumstances he may well hesitate to display views to which some of his members may be radically opposed; his duty to proclaim the truth as he sees it thus conflicts with the need to maintain a corporate life of the church. As a result, many ministers hope to strike the happy medium, giving little voice in their sermons to controversial material, and concentrate on "safe" topics; there is always the temptation to preach what people want rather than what they need. "If religion is the opium of the people", it might well be said, "let us drug them with steady doses of make-believe, and lull them in the false security of platitudes". But a further dose of sedative is hardly the prescription for a body sinking into spiritual somnolence. "We stand for liberty in a world that has, at many points, surrendered to totalitarian authority. . . . We stand for reason in a world that has succumbed to an alarming extent, to blind emotions". The minister who evades the truth is denying both liberty and reason. It is more important that he should preach the truth than that he should safeguard his livelihood.

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However, there is a growing awareness among the clergy that they have a fuller part to play in the life and development of society. As a practical first step, would it not be possible to join several churches together under one ministry, as so much of a minister's routine work is superfluous? It is a psychological fact that we take as much time to accomplish a task as we have time at our disposal, and many ministers may become "too busy" through a guilty feeling that they are not really pulling their weight.

The next step must be to raise the standard of the ministry, eliminating all those who are socially, morally, or for any other reason, undesirable. The ministerial training course is in need of an overhaul. No doubt a sound theological grounding is essential, but a minister's work is concerned with people, their needs and their problems. While there are trained social workers with professional ethics and standards, people in need of help will go to them rather than to the Reverend amateur. Professor John Macmurray has said that "the field of religion is the field of personal relationships". The first essential in giving guidance to others must be to "know thyself", and, here, a basic training in psychology is invaluable.

Where a joint ministry is impractical, other experiments should be carried out, such as those in France where "industrial priests" went out to work in factories. The effect was beneficial all round, for the priest obtained practical experience of the conditions under which his members worked, and the workers came to know their priest on equal terms as a wage earner. Has our movement any plans for such experiments?

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Ultimately, however, we are faced with the fact that the full-time ministry is, in its present form, out-of-date. It is an anachronism which we cannot afford — financially or spiritually. Responsibility for maintaining church unity should fall back on each member of the congregation, and a definite improvement in the life of the church should result. As a denomination, our recent record in social work has not been inspiring, especially when we consider the achievements of an earlier generation. We are living in the reflected glory of a sun which has long since set. The Society of Friends, without paid ministers, can afford to have full-time workers in social service, who have done great pioneering work in this field.

In a deeper sense, too, is it not time that we abandoned the authoritarian spirit of the ministry? A century ago James Martineau wrote: "Grown men and women, in these days, do not sincerely want to be as sheep to a shepherd; and an attempt to work out such a relation incurs all the miseries of pretence". It seems that, in this respect, our movement has failed to grow up. The artificial idea of priesthood, fostered even by Unitarian congregations, should be dispensed with, and the regalia of gown and clerical collar relegated to the museum.

We need to foster the spiritual growth of each member of the congregation; an externally administered dose of religion, taken three times on Sundays, and forgotten for the rest of the week, is not the answer. "We stand for individual freedom in a world that puts its trust chiefly in mass movements and a regimented state". Young people today have a deep longing for religion, but they are indifferent to the traditional forms offered by the churches. There must be a renewed sense of purpose—a desire to act as well as talk—if we are to capture the imagination and fulfil the yearning of this generation.

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THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCHES

SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 1959

Aberdeen, Unitarian Church, Skene Street, 11 and 6, Rev. W. B. Tavener
Aberystwyth, New Street, Meeting House, 11, Rev. J. Coram Davies
Altrincham, Dunham Road Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Arthur W. Vallance
Ainsworth, Unitarian Church, Knowsley Road, 11.15 and 3, Rev. B. Gill
Astley, Unitarian Chapel, Manchester Road, 6.30, Supply
Bath, Trim Street Chapel, Unitarian, 11, Rev. S. Spencer
Belfast, All Souls, Elmwood Avenue, 11.30 and 7, Dr. A. L. Agnew
Belfast, First Church, Rosemary Street, 11.30 and 7, Dr. H. J. McLachlan
Bessels Green (nr. Sevenoaks), Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. W. Waddington
Billingshurst, Free Church, High Street, 11, Mrs. E. Savage
Birkenhead, Unitarian Church, [illegible] Road, 6.30 (March 8) Rev. Maurice Johnson
Birmingham, Church of Messiah, Broad Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon Stuart
Birmingham, Waverley Road Church, and Hurst Street Mission, Small Heath, 6.30, Mr. W. Tench
Blackpool, North Shore, Dickson Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Mr. E. A. West
Blackpool, South Shore, Lytham Road, 11 and 6.30, Mr. Frank Lowe
Bolton, Bank Street, 2.30, Sunday School, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. E. Shirvell Price
Bolton, Unity Church, Deane Road, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. Arthur J. Long
Bolton, Walmsley, 3.15, and Halliwell Road, 6.30 Rev. Kenneth Wright
Bootle (Liver.), Unitarian Chapel, Spain Lane, 6.30, Rev. Henry Hall
Bournemouth, Unitarian Church, West Hill Road, 11, Rev. Lawrence Redfern
Bradford, Broadway Avenue, 4.15, Youth Service
Bradford, Town Hall Square, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Frank A. Bullock
Bridgwater, Christ Church, Dampiet Street, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. Wm. Millar
Bridport, Unitarian Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. G. Randall Jones
Brighton, Christ Church, Unitarian, New Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Rowland
Bristol, Lewin's Mead Meeting, 6.30, Rev. A. H. Butler
Bristol, Oakfield Road, 11, Rev. A. H. Butler, 6.30, Mr. R. L. Nicholson
Burnley, Unitarian Church, Trafalgar Street, 3, Rev. L. Hallworth
Bury, Bank Street, 11, Rev. F. M. Evans, 6.30, Mr. D. Dunkley
Cambridge, Memorial Church, Emmanuel Road, 11 and 6, Rev. H. Stewart Carter
Cardiff, The West Grove Unitarian Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Roy Jones
Chatham, The Church of the Great Companions, Hamond Hill, 3, Mr. John Pickering
Cheltenham, Bayshill Unitarian Church, Royal Well, 10.30, Sunday School, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John M. Quirk
Chester, Matthew Henry's Chapel, Trinity Street, 11 and 6.30, Miss R. Hereford
Chesterfield, Elder Yard Church, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Ernest Shaw
Chowbent Chapel, Atherton, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Twinn
Coventry, Great Meeting House, Holyhead Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. H. Morris
Crewe, Free Christian Church, Beech Street, 6.30, Supply
[illegible], Unitarian Church, [illegible] Street, 11 and 6.30, Mrs. M. R. [illegible]
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley Road, 11, Children's Service, 6.30, Rev. J. P. Chalk
Devonport, Wilson Street Chapel, 11, Children's Chapel, 6.30, Rev. F. Cotter
Derby, Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Mr. J. Woodhouse
Ditchling, Old Meeting House, 10.45, Miss H. K. Watts
Doncaster, Free Christian Church, Hall Gate, 11, Mr. Trevor Jones, 6.30, Rev. G. S. Wesley
Dover, Adrian Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. Philip C. Waterhouse
Dublin, Stephen's Green, West, 11.30 and 7.30, Rev. E. Savell Hicks
Dudley, Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Norman Richards
Dukinfield, Old Chapel, Chapel Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. S. P. Whitehouse
Dundee, Unitarian Church, 53 Constitution Road, 11, Rev. G. D. Forth
Edinburgh, St. Mark's Church, Castle Terrace, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Bruce Findlow
Exeter, George's Chapel, South Street, 6.30, Rev. Dr. F. D. [illegible]
Gee Cross, Hyde Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. Harry Smith
Glasgow, St. Vincent Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Youth Service
[illegible], [illegible] Street, 2, Sunday School, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. H. [illegible]
Gloucester, Barton Street, 3, Rev. J. M. Quirk
Guildford, Ward Street Church, 11.15, Rev. E. Neil Chad
Hale Chapel, Hale Barns, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. G. J. Phelps
Halifax, Northgate End, 10.45, Rev. J. B. Towers
Hastings, Free Christian Church, South Terrace, 11, Rev. Denbigh Hilton, 6.30 Mrs. Muriel Hilton
Hinckley, Great Meeting, Baines Lane, 11 and 6, Rev. E. A. Davies
Horsham, Worthing Road, 11, Rev. J. Martin Hill
Huddersfield, Fitzwilliam Street, 3.30, Junior Church, 6, Rev. J. B. Towers
Hull, Park Street Church (Unitarian), 6.30, Rev. Ernest Price
Kendal, Market Place, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Rev. T. M. Waddle
Kidderminster, New Meeting House, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Edward W. Hills
Knutsford, Brook Street Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Albert Smith
Lancaster, St. Nicholas Street Church, 6.30, Supply
Leeds, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. B. L. Golland
Leicester, Narborough Road, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. C. V. Walker
Leicester, The Great Meeting, East Bond Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Leonard Mason
Lewes, Westgate Chapel, 11, Rev. [illegible]
Lincoln, High Street, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Rev. H. W. [illegible]
Liverpool, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Dr. P. N. [illegible]
Liverpool, Bootle Free Church, 11, Rev. C. A. [illegible]
Liverpool, Domestic Mission, Mill Street, 6.30, Rev. J. Kerr Morrison
Liverpool, Gateacre Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Stanley R. Butler
Liverpool, Hamilton Road, Everton, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Supply
Liverpool, Hope Street, 6.30, Rev. C. A. [illegible]
Liverpool, Ullet Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. [illegible]
London, Bell Street, Edgware Road, 6, Rev. Walter M. Long
London, Blackfriars Mission and Stamford Street Chapel, 6.30, Mr. John Wilson
London, Brixton, Effra Road, 11, Rev. S. G. Lee
London, Essex Church, Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill Gate, 11, Dr. J. Graham, 6.30, Mr. R. Thompson
London, Forest Gate, Upton Lane, 6.30, Mr. A. G. Tattersall
London, Golders Green, Hoop Lane, 11, Miss M. K. [illegible], 6.30, Rev. K. C. Treacher
London, Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham Place, 6.30, Rev. Ralph E. [illegible] (also 11, 1st Sunday in the month)
London, Hampstead, Rosslyn Hill, 11, Rev. Howard P. [illegible]
London, Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. K. C. Treacher
London, Ilford High Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. T. E. Dalton
London, Islington, Upper Street, 6.30, Rev. A. V. Fox
London, Kilburn Unitarian Christian Church, Quex Road, 11, Rev. A. V. Fox
London, Lewisham Unitarian Church, High Street, 11, Rev. R. [illegible]
London, Leytonstone, Lea Bridge Road, [illegible] Green, 6.30, Rev. R. Taylor
London, Mansford Street Church, Bethnal Green, 6.30, Rev. R. W. [illegible]
London, Richmond Free Church, Ormond Road, 11, Mr. R. Travers
London, Stratford, West Ham Lane, Unitarian Church, 11.30, Children's Church, 6.30 Rev. F. [illegible]
London, Wandsworth Unitarian Church, East Hill, 11, Rev. Arthur Peacock (also 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
London, Welsh Unitarian Church at Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 1st and 3rd Sundays, 6, Rev. T. L. Jones
London, Wood Green, Unity Church, Newnham Road, 6.30, Mr. S. R. Martin
Lytham St. Annes (Ansdell), Channing Road, 11, Student
Macclesfield, King Edward Street, 10.45 and 6.30, Supply
Maidstone, Unitarian Church, Market Buildings, 6.30, Rev. Denbigh Hilton
Manchester, Blackley Unitarian Church, Chapel Lane, 6.30, Rev. David C. Doel
Manchester, Cross Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Supply
Manchester, Gorton, Brookfield Church, Hyde Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Maurice Barnes
Manchester, Monton Church, Eccles, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. Hill Waring
Manchester, Pendleton Unitarian, Cross Lane, 6.30, Supply
Manchester, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 6.30, Mr. Allen Kirby
Manchester, Renshaw Street Mission, 6.30, Supply
Manchester, Stand Chapel, Whitefield (March 8), 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Sydney H. Knight
Manchester, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 11, Mr. Philip M. Brown
Manchester, Wythenshawe, Unitarian Church, Brownley Road, Benchill, 6.30, Rev. John Gill
Mansfield, Old Meeting House, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Sherratt
Marple, Unitarian Hall, 31 Stockport Road, 11 each Sunday
Mexborough, Free Christian Church, 6.30, Supply
Middleton, Old Road Chapel, 3.15, Rev. David C. Doel
Moretonhampstead, 3, and Newton Abbot, 6.30, Rev. C. G. Toone
Newcastle-on-Tyne, The Church of the Divine Unity, Ellison Place, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Storer
Newchurch (Rossendale), Bethlehem Unitarian Church, 10.30 and 6, Rev. John Mather
Northampton, Kettering Road Church, 6.30, Mr. John Midgley
Norwich, Octagon Chapel, Colegate, 11, Rev. J. A. Kennedy
Nottingham, High Pavement Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. C. Gordon Bolam
Oldbury, Unitarian Church, Birmingham Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Harold A. Gore
Oldham, Lord Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. T. E. Nuttall
Oxford, Manchester College Chapel, 11.30, The Rev. The Principal
Padiham, Nazareth Unitarian Church, Knight Hill, 10.30 and 6, Rev. L. Hallworth
Park Lane Chapel, near Wigan, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon L. Clarke
Plymouth, Unitarian Church, Notte Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. H. Kennedy
Poole, Unitarian Church, Hill Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Rev. J. W. Dunnill
Portsmouth, John Pounds Memorial Church, High Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. J. B. Stevens
Preston, Unitarian Chapel, Church Street, 6.30, Rev. G. H. Green
Ringwood, Hants., The Meeting House, 11, Rev. Francis Terry
Rivington Chapel, Nr. Horwich, Lancs., 3, Rev. R. I. Pritchard
Rochdale, Blackwater Street, 10.30 and 6, Rev. F. W. Bass
Rotherham, Church of Our Father, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. E. Phillips
Sale, Atkinson Road, 11, Rev. John Gill
Scarborough, Unitarian Church, Westborough, 6.30, Rev. G. W. Parkinson
Sheffield (Attercliffe), 6.30, Supply
Sheffield, Fulwood Old Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. F. Sowell
Sheffield, Unity Church, Crookesmoor Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. D. Davies
Sheffield, Upper Chapel, 11, Rev. G. Stanley Whitby, 6.30, Supply
Shrewsbury, High Street, Unitarian, 11 and 6.30, Supply
Sidmouth, Old Meeting, Unitarian, High Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. Whittaker
Southampton, Church of the Saviour, London Road, 6.30, Supply
Southend-on-Sea, Darnley Road, 6.30, Supply
Southport, Portland Street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. T. J. Jones
Stockport, Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. J. R. Blackburn
St. Helens, Corporation Street, 6.30, Rev. T. S. Jones
Stockton-on-Tees, Wellington Street, 6.30, Rev. A. D. Williams (also 11, 2nd Sunday in the month)
Stourbridge, Presbyterian Unitarian Chapel, 11, Rev. C. Sharpe
Swansea, Unitarian Church, High Street, 6.30, Rev. L. Baker Short (also 11, First Sunday in the month)
Swansea, [illegible] Free Christian Meeting House, 11, Supply
Swinton, Swinton Hall Road, 10.45, Miss J. Bevan, 6.30, Rev. B. L. Hopkins
Taunton, Mary St. Chapel, 11, Rev. Wm. Millar
Tenterden, Old Meeting House, Ashford Road, 6.30, Rev. G. Kenrick
Todmorden, Unitarian Church, 10.45 and 6, Rev. Alec L. Findlow
Torquay, Unity Church, Montpellier Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Charles Eaton
Trowbridge, Conigre Unitarian Church, 6, Rev. S. Sibson
Warrington, Cairo Street, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. Eric Wild
Watford, Friends' House, Church Road (by permission), 7.30 (Last Sunday in the month)
Wallasey, Memorial Church, Manor Road, 11, Devotional Service, 6.30, Supply
Walsall, Unitarian Free Church, Stafford Street, 11, Rev. R. J. Williamson, 2.30, Sunday School
West Bromwich, Lodge Road, 11, Children's Church, 6.15, Rev. R. J. Williamson
West Kirby, Brookfield Gardens, 11, Rev. Maurice Johnson (also 6.30, first Sunday in the month)
Whitby, Flowergate, 2.30, Rev. G. W. Parkinson
Wilmslow, Dean Row, 10.45, Rev. A. B. Downing. Styal, 3, Rev. A. B. Downing
York, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 6.30, Supply
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AUSTRALIA

Adelaide, Unitarian Christian Church, Wakefield St., 11 and 7, Rev. Colin Gibson
Melbourne, Unitarian Church, Cathedral Place, C.2.; Unitarian Half-Hour broadcast, 4.15. Services: 4 p.m. second Sunday in each month, Evening 7 p.m. Rev. V. James
Perth, Western Australia, Unitarian Free Christian Fellowship, Rev. R. H. [illegible], 152 Duke Street, Scarborough, West Australia
Sydney, New South Wales, Unitarian Church, 15 Francis Street (off College St.) 7.15, Rev. D. W. [illegible], Manse Telephone LX 5525
Unitarian Fellowship of Australia, 1 [illegible] Alley, Melbourne, C.1. Minister: Rev. W. [illegible]. Meetings as advertised.
Springvale Community Church, Austin Road, Seaford (Vic.). S.S. weekly at 2.15 p.m. Public Worship, fortnightly, 3.15 p.m. Minister: Rev. W. [illegible]

CANADA

Montreal, Church of the Messiah, Sherbrooke Street West and Simpson Street, 11, Rev. Angus Cameron
Toronto, First Unitarian Church, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, 11, Rev. W. P. Jenkins
Vancouver, B.C., Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 1,550 Tenth Avenue West, 11, Rev. A. P. [illegible]

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland, Unitarian Church, Ponsonby Road, 11 and 7, Mr. H. J. Wilson
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Death

Tayler—On February 23, 1959, at her home, 7 Ockley Road, Streatham, S.W.16, Hilda Mary Tayler, widow of Athelstane Artaud Tayler, in her 89th year.

Reginald William Wilde

February 8, 1895 — February 17, 1959

During the past few months the congregation of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, has watched the walls of the new chapel rising out of the ruins of the old with the keenest anticipation, the difficulties and disappointments of nearly twenty years finally overcome. It is tragic indeed that he who had given himself with the utmost devotion to the preparations for the opening next month should not live to see his dream fulfilled. The minister of the chapel, Dr. R. W. Wilde, died in hospital on February 17 from a cerebral haemorrhage suffered eight days before. The services on February 21 at Platt Chapel and Manchester Crematorium were conducted by the Rev. F. Cottier and Principal F. Kenworthy. Not only is his death a cruel blow to the Cross Street congregation, it is a severe loss to the whole Unitarian and Free Christian community.

Reginald Wilde was born in Norwich and was destined at first for a business career in accountancy. But the call to the ministry was strong. Although he was brought up an Anglican and never lost something of his affection for the Church of England, he found his true spiritual home among Unitarians. To our churches he gave nearly 36 years of unremitting service. He began in 1923 as Lay Pastor of Halliwell Road Free Church, Bolton. He had a distinguished career at the Unitarian College and throughout his life remained a student. Later in his ministry, though he never allowed his pastoral responsibilities to suffer, he graduated successively, as an external student, at the Universities of London and Manchester and Trinity College, Dublin; at the last-named place he gained his Doctorate in Philosophy. He published several books on psychology and the pastoral ministry. In 1945 he preached the sermon at the Annual Meetings of the General Assembly and in 1957 became President of the Sunday School Association, though he was unable to fulfil the duties of the office through a severe illness. Illness, indeed, prevented his acceptance of other appointments.

Dr. Wilde's career was rich in many ways but it will be above all as a friend and a true pastor that a multitude of people will keep in their hearts an abiding memory of him. His true memorial will be found in his ministries in the two northern counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire, at Bolton and Todmorden, at Leeds and Manchester, and in Northern Ireland, where he served the First Church in Belfast for 11 years and the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church as Moderator. He held an exalted view of the ministerial office and knew that the true work of a minister was the cure of souls, to none who came to him for help and guidance did he deny his time, his patience and his wisdom. His ministry at Cross Street was all too short but the seeds of friendship were quickly sown. All whom he served as guide and counsellor will remember his steadfast friendship, his gaiety of spirit, his constant cheerfulness even under the burden of illness, his inexhaustible fund of good stories and good humour. To all he gave the true wealth of joy and companionship. He was indeed a generous spirit.

F.K.

Cinema

During the Brussels Exhibition last year, an international jury of film historians drew up a list of twelve films which in their opinion were the twelve best ever made. High on the list was *La Grande Illusion*, directed by Jean Renoir, and now showing at the Academy Cinema. It was made in 1937, but apart from its being a story of the 1914-18 war, there is nothing dated about it (a severe test for a 22-year-old film). It is of the same genre as G. W. Pabst's *Kameradschaft* in that it stresses the humanity of man to man; a humanity that underlies much seeming-enmity and cuts across many so-called barriers, even in time of war.

Taking part are three of the screen's best actors—not judging by present standards alone—Eric von Stroheim, Jean Gabin and Pierre Fresnay. The English sub-titles make it easy to follow.

Also in the programme, *March to Aldermaston* was obviously chosen as being complementary to the main film. It runs for 32 minutes, but since it was a four-day march, a great deal of interest has been packed into this half-hour. An exciting moment is provided for Unitarians by a large close-up of a fellow Unitarian, Harold Steele, having lunch with his wife on the roadside. The solemnity of the event (livened up occasionally by the music of the younger marchers) has been caught to perfection by the technicians and others who voluntarily gave their services.

B.I.

Holidays

BREATH-TAKING FLIGHT TO THE "MIDNIGHT SUN" can be arranged for those accompanying Mrs. Parkinson on one of the finest tours in Europe—staying at three centres: Ulvik, Fjaerland, Oslo (June 13-27). Tours: to Interlaken (August 9-22); to Lugano, in time for exciting "Vintage Pageant" (September 20-October 3), led by Rev. G. Parkinson, 10a Westbourne Grove, Scarborough. Lone travellers welcome. Nothing compares

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